DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 187 206 HE 012 628

AUTHOR Eveslage, Sonja A.
TITLE Implementing an Innovation in Higher Education: A Multi-Perspective Analysis. ASHE Annual Meeting 1980 Paper.
PUB DATE Mar 80
NOTE 35p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (Washington, DC, March 4-5, 1980)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; Decision Making; Delivery Systems; Educational Assessment; *Educational Innovation; Educational Policy; *External Degree Programs; Higher Education; Models; Organizational Change; Political Science; *Program Implementation; State Boards of Education; *State Universities; Student Characteristics; Systems Approach
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting 1980; *Minnesota

ABSTRACT

This case study describes the introduction and consideration of a state board staff proposal that the more traditional Minnesota State Universities adopt external degree programs. A model for making practices congruent with policy decisions is presented. The process of examining the external degree proposal, beginning with the state board actions and later the campus activities, is detailed. The examination process at each of the four institutions had different outcomes. To summarize the major outcomes and facilitate comparison, the categories of perception, policies, and practices are summarized. Tables are presented that list by institution general impressions, policies, and practices on the four major characteristics addressed by the state board office proposal: substance, delivery, evaluation, and clientele. Data from the institutions are analyzed on a systems level, using a political systems approach. The internal processes are analyzed using a synthesis of diffusion, organizational development, and community power models. Hypotheses that will assist in specifying the variables affecting implementation of administratively initiated innovations are presented. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Implementing an Innovation in Higher Education: A Multi-Perspective Analysis

Sonja A. Eveslage
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Sonja A. Eveslage
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED187206

The process of incorporating innovations into existing organizations has concerned both theoreticians and practitioners. This paper responds to the concerns of both by employing a cross-case analysis that first presents, then analyzes, data from four institutions that considered the same innovation. The resulting synthesis suggests hypotheses that will assist in specifying the variables affecting implementation of administratively initiated innovations. In short, it presents a model for making practices congruent with policy decisions.

Setting the Stage

This case study describes the introduction and consideration of a state board staff proposal that the six more traditional Minnesota State Universities adopt External Degree programs, an innovation modeled after Minnesota Metropolitan, the seventh institution in the system.

As it was generally discussed in the early 1970s, the external degree went "to the very heart of the system of higher education and called for radical changes in its structure and process" (Houle, 1973, p. 13).

The Minnesota proposal fell within this framework and charged older, employed, part-time students with defining curriculum content. Further, the proposal suggested that competency evaluation, nonclassroom tests and varied off-campus learning experiences might be the basis for that learning (Eveslage, 1977). On the face of it, the external degree proposal had the characteristics of an organizational innovation, i.e., it was planned (Keil, 1969) and perceived as new (Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek, 1973), and it committed organizational resources (Zaltman, et al., 1973).

HE 011 620

To help explain how this particular innovation was received, a brief history of the Minnesota system is provided here.

Five of the seven institutions in the university system opened as normal schools (Snarr, 1950), but today offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The sixth opened in 1967 as a four-year technical and liberal arts undergraduate institution, and the seventh opened in 1971 as a two-year upper division external degree-granting institution. The State University system is funded by the legislature using a formula based on the full-time equivalent enrollment.

The system's central office opened in 1955 and, to date, has had only four chief executives. In 1967, when G. Theodore Mitau was named chancellor, he began redefining the chancellor's role and initiating a number of changes and innovations. The newly defined leadership role of the chancellor's office was the critical variable that allowed suggestions of a policy like the "External Degree."

As "part and parcel" of a larger program, several management changes were instituted that helped create a system from the individual campuses. Representative changes were centralizing budgeting procedures and developing a structured communications pattern between the chancellor's office and the individual campuses. In addition, the university system was extended in 1971 by the opening of a new institution, Minnesota Metropolitan. At a time when legislatures were looking askance at investing in "bricks and mortar," Metropolitan was mandated to serve older, more mature students. This audience, along with the competency-based evaluation central to Metropolitan's design, constituted the major elements of the state board office's External Degree proposal.

Within this context, the chancellor's office began initiating proposals relevant to the institution's curricular offerings and delivery systems. Chief

among these were the "New Careers" proposal - directed toward reallocating internal resources and developing non-teaching career paths for students - and the External Degree Program directed toward enhancing the institution's regional service missions by reaching new populations with new methods.

Tracing the Innovation

The External Degree proposal originated with the state board staff and was subsequently considered at each of the four campuses studied. That examination process is detailed next, beginning with board office actions, then reporting campus activities.

The Role of the State Board Office. Cognizant of its role as support staff, state office personnel began the process of considering external degree programs with the State University Board. At an August 1971 retreat with board members and staff, the vice-chancellor for academic affairs delivered a paper that demonstrated ways traditional higher education assumptions served a limited clientele. He suggested that an external degree program would more effectively meet the needs of older students who may be employed or otherwise limited in their ability to be full-time on-campus students. According to the chancellor and the vice-chancellor for academic affairs, the board was "very supportive." But that support was not ever solidified by the full board's official action.

Once the preliminary authorization had been received, board office staff encouraged other policy groups to consider the External Degree concept. Consequently, the Administrative Council, composed of the seven university presidents, asked the board's Educational Policies Committee to approve the External Degree concept and establish a system-wide Ad Hoc Committee with the goal of developing a program that would go beyond extension work. As a response to the Council's June 6, 1972, memorandum, college presidents appointed representatives

to the system-wide advisory committee. Both board staff and the campuses treated that memorandum as official board direction.

The Ad Hoc Advisory Committee met twice during the summer of 1972 and developed guidelines that the committee and the Administrative Council approved in August 1972. The guidelines recommended that the advisory committee continue to function as an inter-campus communications and problem-solving mechanism and that individual campuses develop external programs central to the mission of regional service universities. The guidelines also requested flexibility in admissions, residency requirements, and time lines; creativity in evaluation; comparability in degrees; and mechanisms for reaching non-traditional students, rewarding faculty, and financing equitably.

The state board office also initiated several other supportive efforts. The chancellor's annual "state of the system" address in August 1972 emphasized external studies. The Educational Policies Committee received progress reports in November, and a December conference highlighted external studies. At the chancellor's request, presidents invited participants whose support would be critical to program acceptance. These representatives heard Lyman Glenny emphasize the need to adapt quickly to changing demands on higher education.

Although board staff continued to support the external degree concept verbally, the next official board office action came after the legislature had approved a program development line item for the 1973-75 biennial budget, with $230,000 allocated to external studies programs. At its August 1973 meeting, the Budget and Finance Committee approved funding guidelines recommending that colleges with external studies students be granted $10,000 after submitting a budget justifying the request and that the remaining balance be allocated quarterly based on enrollments. The guidelines also recommended using "underutilized faculty" first and collecting sufficient tuition to cover non-faculty salary

costs. Each campus studied requested and received the initial $10,000.

Beta. The consideration process at Beta began when its president advocated the external degree concept informally among community elites, fostering community acceptance that resulted in some persons agreeing to provide tuition subsidies for initial external students.

The first official memorandum in September of 1972 suggested that the external degree differed from traditional. It also identified a "skeptical" faculty member as the system-wide ad hoc committee member, suggested a local committee would be appointed and the proposal considered by the faculty senate, and reflected a concern for the effective use of resources. The memorandum outlined two areas of committee concern: the implementation issue and the substantive issue of external degree vs. external studies.

The next official correspondence was a November 1972 memorandum, dated the day before the Faculty Senate appointed a committee to "advise the president." The six-member committee was duly appointed and met two or three days a week for several hours at a time. The president and the committee chair (who also served on the system-wide committee) guided the committee through a process of setting admissions requirements, developing advising procedures, and maintaining quality control. By winter quarter 1973, a faculty member was released one-third time to work on administrative details. This person subsequently was judged ineffective and terminated by the institution.

The committee's active involvement in the development process represented faculty involvement, but by asking key faculty to advise external students, the committee also extended its role to include as many faculty opinion leaders as possible. The committee also reported to the faculty senate in January and February 1973 once about the issue of accepting transfer credits from vocational technical schools and once with a general report. The Senate took no official action, and none was requested.

In the spring of 1973, an internal search for a full-time director was conducted. Of the three persons interviewed, two were identified as "significant campus politicians." One was hired as director, one served on a release-time basis as associate director, and the third remained uncooperative with the program.

The director reflected the faculty's concern with quality and assumed that the individual external studies students would operate under the same catalog requirements as on-campus students. Thus, he dealt only with what he called "mechanical and delivery issues," marketing, recruiting, and public relations. Although the central administration said it would have been happy with 50 students, 185 were enrolled by the fall of 1973.

In keeping with the "action research" approach, solutions were devised as needed. When the 185 students arrived, staff was hired. Costs to hire the new staff were partially met by a federal grant that ran from July 1975 through June 1977.

Administratively, the external studies unit was connected with continuing education. The two were mutually supportive with continuing education scheduling more than 300 off-campus courses, many available to external studies students. Ten external studies advisors helped develop and assess competency claims. If the faculty refused student claims, the advisors would "work around" the refusal and find another method for awarding competency credit. Students could claim competency for a specific course or for elective credits. Both of these required departmental action. In the third method, the advisor could recommend credits and the external studies committee evaluated the recommendation.

Internal office data indicated that competency awards ranged from 0 to 75 credit hours and that students earned an average of 22 to 25 credit hours through this method. The few students who received no competency awards

usually had a large number of transfer credits and preferred to complete their degrees through coursework.

Alpha. At Alpha, discussion of the External Degree was initiated by the president who responded to Educational Policies memoradum by appointing a committee. A middle manager chaired the committee of representatives from each college. It operated deliberately investigating the external degree concept's background, raising philosophical questions, and discussing the implications. Although the committee did not complete a proposal by its August deadline, it (or the chairperson) drafted a proposal for the November state board meeting. The proposal requested a full-time dean and the equivalent of six full-time faculty for each of four years. These elements also were included in the initial proposal forwarded to the faculty senate for consideration in April 1973.

The senate tentatively approved the report but requested more information by December and reconstituted the committee, holding an election and subsequently requiring that the committee report to the senate and not to the president. Consequently, some of the original committee members were replaced. The most significant replacement was one college's substitution of a quiet and influential member for a powerful person, probably signifying that college's lack of interest in cooperating with the external program.

Against a backdrop of concern about cutting faculty positions, the newly elected committee worked with little general concern from the faculty about its operations. The final document approved in April 1974 included guidelines suggesting the program was designed to remove barriers for nontraditional students. Before returning to the senate with the proposal, the committee held open hearings and issued the senate-requested impact statements. With little discussion, the proposal was adopted at the May 22, 1974, senate meeting.

The first director was hired after an open search and began in September 1974 to develop policies and procedures. In March 1975, the director resigned after becoming disillusioned with what he perceived as faculty concern about FTE's rather than service to students. An active committee member accepted an acting part-time appointment and served until August 1976, when a different staff member was recruited to assume the half-time acting position. That person served on an acting basis until the summer of 1976, and, after a job search, assumed the full-time directorship in September 1976.

By February 1977, Alpha had 134 external studies students, most of whom were over the age of 25. If competency evaluation is used as a measure of innovativeness, however, the program was not innovative. The average competency award has been 15 credits, with most students earning only three or four.

Gamma. In the fall of 1971, Gamma established the President's Task Force For Change, designed to undertake serious institutional evaluation and explore new ways of solving institutional problems. By the time the task force guidelines were discussed at the September 30, 1971, faculty senate meeting, 80 faculty had volunteered for the 12 available positions. The senate then requested revisions in the chairperson selection process, demonstrating a commitment to the project and a concern with democratic process. During the same time period, the faculty senate heard the chairperson of the Education Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee state that any expansion in the system would have to come in nontraditional forms, such as Minnesota Metropolitan. Meanwhile, a joint faculty senate--faculty association committee studied budget cuts and by January had developed extensive guidelines for minimizing the negative impact of budget cuts.

Against this backdrop, the task force suggested expanding continuing education and developing a faculty instructional center. An implementation committee was appointed and was to report in the fall of 1972.

When the Educational Policies memorandum arrived at Gamma, it came to an institution where more than a year had been spent considering the ramifications of a changing educational climate and the means of adapting to it. The final task force recommendations addressed the mandate of the Educational Policies Committee by recommending a degree in general studies, but no "external degree." But the report also recommended competency evaluation procedures be developed, if necessary. This was the last official consideration of competency evaluation at Gamma.

By October 1972 the faculty senate was dealing with enrollment decline and calling for a "moratorium on staff cuts."

The continuing education program expanded and helped offset pressures from enrollment decline. In accordance with the implementation report's suggestion, groups of four or five faculty members talked with potential students at off-campus sites. During the 1972-73 academic year, a faculty member was released half time to further develop the program. His appointment ended the minimal consideration given to competency evaluations, because anything called an "external degree" was "less than" an on-campus degree. In 1973, the director became full-time and was appointed dean in 1974.

Between 1972 and 1975-76, Gamma's off-campus FTE production increased by 370 percent. although the 1976-77 enrollment declined slightly, suggesting the end of growth spurt.

Although its program lacked competency evaluation, Gamma applied in March 1974 for the $10,000 allotment for external degree programs. No written response to the original request was located, but Gamma's revised request in April said Gamma would "examine the possibility of a competency-based assessment and more individualized approaches both to the academic programs and to delivery." The request was granted.

Delta. Between the summer of 1972 and January 1977, administrators promised external studies programs to the residents of Delta's service area while four committees considered and reconsidered the external studies concept. The initial consideration began in the fall of 1972 after the memorandum from the Educational Policies Committee had been issued. A June 1972 presidential memorandum to the faculty assembly established the initial task force, headed by a central administrator. Responding to concern about faculty participation, the president requested in June that the faculty assembly appoint three committee members; 17 other members apparently were presidential appointees. The committee met four times that summer and then forwarded to the president a preliminary report suggesting that extensive planning and additional resources were needed.

Responding in September, the president asked the faculty assembly to name a curriculum committee subcommittee to implement the task force's suggestions. This subcommittee, with a middle manager as chairperson, had little carry over in membership. Only two of its eight members had served on the earlier committee. Their report, filed in April 1973, recommended an administrative structure, fiscal policies, and additional outside resources. The report was apparently forgotten.

During 1972-73, the committee began again with a changed membership. Only three of the 11 members then had served two years and one had served on the previous year's committee. Seven were new appointees.

The committee applied for and received the $10,000 in seed money from the state board office, along with a caution to use "existing staff resources in place of overload payments." Instead, an administrative intern was hired, consultants were brought in, and workshops run. The person hired as an intern

held a half-time academic appointment, and the hiring was perceived by some as an effort to "quiet" a member of the "liberal wing" of the faculty. The planned workshop did not seem to generate widespread faculty support, but it did motivate the committee to complete a "first draft" of a proposed external studies program.

With completion of that report, consideration of the external studies program slowed. A committee report was scheduled for a February 1974 faculty senate meeting, but no minutes confirmed its presentation. In 1975, appointment of a new academic vice-president, who had experience at Minnesota Metropolitan, was perceived as a boost to the program. The visible evidence of that support was an unsuccessful grant proposal for a three-year program.

During this lull in the consideration process, the state system moved to collective bargaining. The external studies proposal again emerged at two May 1976 "meet and confer" sessions between the university administration and the faculty representatives.

When it became apparent no federal funding would be forthcoming, the president contacted area residents and set fall 1976 as a starting date for a program. At the same time, the faculty association proposed a five-person committee as an administrative unit responsible for a two-year program that would handle a maximum of 50 students. Simultaneously, a central administrator recommended proceeding "with no additional input from meet and confer." When the actions of each group became apparent to the other, the conflict was formalized in memoranda. An August 1976 memorandum accused the administration of "taking over" the faculty role, and the program stilled. In November 1976, a middle manager recommended starting a pilot group of students during winter quarter, but no action was taken. By December 1976, the meet and confer sessions concerned the implementation question. No students were enrolled, but administrators scheduled an introductory course for that spring quarter.

Summarizing the Outcomes

The consideration process at each of the institutions studied had differing outcomes, with Beta being most accepting of the state board proposal and Delta still considering adoption. To summarize the major outcomes and allow easy comparison, the categories of perception, policies, and practices are capsulized here. Because perceptions were collected after the fact, and may well have been shaped by the campus consideration processes, they are presented as outcomes.

Table 1 lists by institution the general impressions of external degree/studies proposal on the four major characteristics addressed by the state board office proposal--substance, delivery, evaluation, and clientele. Because discussions of the proposal's substance seemed to center on the issue of academic quality in terms of a new degree vs. a new means of earning that degree, degree is listed as a term synonymous with substance.

Note that Gamma was the only institution where an external degree was perceived as "less than" a traditional program. At the other institutions, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that the only innovative characteristics were the technical components--delivery, evaluation, and clientele. At Gamma only the clientele was perceived as new.

Table 2 details the policies and practices regarding the same four characteristics--substance, delivery, evaluation, and clientele. All three institutions had a general studies type of degree that permitted easy enrollment of external students and removed the need for establishing a separate degree program. Beyond that, the major difference is that Beta and Alpha included competency evaluation within the range of evaluation. Gamma, by focusing on traditional credit and non-credit awards, suggests that knowledge

Table 1 - Summary of Major Perceptions at the Institutions Studied

Perceptions	Beta	Alpha	Gamma	Delta
Substance/Degree	concern with maintaining qualities defined as traditional degree	defined by minority as student control of curriculum; by majority as existing degree	defined as 1) substantively different and "less than" a regular program or 2) same as continuing education	concern with maintaining quality
Delivery	a new track	new delivery system	extension of continuing education	discussion of "nontraditional" delivery
Evaluation	competency assessment, testing implicit	competency evaluation testing implicit	traditional means	competency evaluation discussed
Clientele	for non-traditional in terms of age, employment, location, full-time student status	for non-traditional in terms of age, employment, location, and full-time student status	for non-traditional in terms of age, employment, location, and full-time student status	for non-traditional in terms of age, employment, location, and full-time student status

Table 2 - External Studies Policies and Practices at Three Institutions

Policies	Beta	Alpha	Gamma
Degree	B.A. with Individualized Study Major	Use of existing AA, BA, BS or Bachelor of Elective Studies	Associate of Science in General Studies Bachelor of Science in General Studies Master of Science in Continuing Studies* (awaiting board approval)
Delivery	independent study internships learning contrasts workshops work, travel experience college coursework independent study	life experiences independent study internships college courses	off-campus courses workshops short-courses seminars encouraging mini-courses or individualized packets
Evaluation	standardized examinations, e.g., CLEP department-constructed examinations written and oral examinations formal presentations competency evaluations	testing, e.g., CLEP transfer of credits competency evaluation instructor evaluation	credit and non-credit
Clientele	over the age of 25	non-traditional in age, location, time of coursework, and residence requirements	all ages and occupations, particularly those full-time employees

Table 2 - Page 2

Practices	Beta	Alpha	Gamma
Degree	B.A. with individualized study major	Bachelor of Elective Studies	Individualized Studies major Master's degree in Continuing Studies
Delivery Learning Experiences	300 off-campus courses 42 credit hours of audio/ video tape	2 televised courses purchased	off-campus classes
Evaluation	3-track evaluation system, instructor, department or committee 15-20 competency credits per student	3 or 4 competency credits per student	classroom evaluation consideration of standardized tests
Clientele	Fall, 1973 - 185 students average age 36 part-time students advanced placement average competency award 22 to 25 credits	Feb. 1977 - 134 students age - over 25 average competency award 3 or 4 credits	Between 1972 and 1975-76 FTE generation up 370 percent average age 39.4 employed full-time

rather than competencies will be evaluated. Moving to the practices list shows that, although Beta and Alpha had adopted mechanisms for reaching non-traditional goals, they were used only minimally. Beta's students, with an average competency award of twenty quarter hours, typically completed less than one-half a year's academic work using this nontraditional means.

Analyzing the Consideration/Decision Process

These four parallel stories of consideration processes are the basis for beginning to isolate the elements in an implementation model, i.e. a model describing how policy decisions are fulfilled. To move in that direction, the data are analyzed first on a systems level, using a political systems rubric. Then the internal processes are analyzed using a synthesis of diffusion, organizational development, and community power models.

A Political Systems Perspective

This analysis has been directed by open systems theory (Katz and Kahn, 1966) that depicts organizations as dynamic entities continually interacting and attempting to control their environments (McNeil, 1978). Easton's (1965, p. 50) concept of political systems as directing interaction towards the "authoritative allocation of values," refines and specifies the organizations' relationships to their environments.

Board office Actions. Each of the four campuses, as part of the state university system, was directly affected by the state board office actions. In addition, as organizations with histories and capabilities of acting autonomously, they were also able to relate to the large environment and identify forces that were variously used to strengthen or mitigate state board office influence. The two major environmental factors affecting campuses seeking support for their value choices were the role of the state board and the threat of enrollment decline. These two variables were critical in initially articulating and legi-

timating the innovation, as well as providing the impetus for considering or implementing it.

With the External Degree proposal, the state board office filtered and directed general discussions (e.g. Diversity by Design) about the need for educational institutions to adapt, thus serving as demand articulator, a role that both grew from and was limited by legislative authority.

Because of its legislatively mandated authority, the board office had central administrative authority for the seven campuses in the Minnesota State University system. But the board office faced the reality of exercising and legitimating that power. Since the office's recently extended authority had not been fully embraced by the campuses, the board office faced the problem of defining and gaining acceptance for its authority role in curriculum related matters. Thus, in its role as demand articulator, the board office selected a non-coercive leadership role, requiring participation and decision-making on each campus. The advantages of this relatively non-threatening role were counter-balanced by the uncertainties resulting from allowing implementation decisions to be made at a sub-unit level.

At the same time the central office was seeking legitimation of its authority role and thus implying an expanded power base, it exercised its existing political power in three ways: agenda-setting, gatekeeping, and resource allocation. Consideration of the external degree/external studies occurred only because the chancellor's office included the item first on the system then on each campus agenda. By exercising its gatekeeping function through establishing appropriate bureaucratic procedures (e.g. the Educational Policy Committee's memorandum) and directing information concerning external degree/external studies programs to those judged to be key campus decision makers (through conferences,

reading lists, and memoranda), the board staff elicited campus consideration of the innovation and attempted to select and thus control those who would function in boundary and/or advocate roles.

In contrast, the board office's resource allocation powers on this issue were more suggested than real. With the total allocation for program development set at $230,000 (less than one-half of one percent of the total operating budget), the budget impact was minimal. Further, the initial $10,000 awards were allocated to each of the four institutions studied despite some of the campuses' apparent noncompliance with the guidelines. The largest share of this allocation, however, did go to Beta, the campus most effective in implementing the board office policy direction. Because of the small dollar amount and because the noncomplying campuses were already clear that they had not followed board office guidelines, the central office wisely declined from withholding the $10,000 as a sanction. With three of the campuses studied working to develop a program, and the fourth, Gamma, viewing the board office as restraining its program development, a withholding action would likely have been perceived as "power politics" and would have reduced the board office's legitimacy.

This resource allocation role was, in Easton's terms, a process of articulating demands and developing supports. The state board office worked carefully, sharing information and supporting the program. At least some respondents believed their campus presidents would get accolades from the state board office for promoting external studies. By accepting board office influence in this one instance, some campuses hoped to gain more positive consideration in the future. Gamma, in contrast, wished to influence rather than

be influenced by the board office. Both responses suggest that the state office would gain additional legitimacy each time campuses responded favorably to its policy directions.* This analysis implies that campus acceptance of the innovation involved also accepting an enlarged state office authority/control function, thus hindering implementation of the innovation, at least at Gamma.

Declining Enrollments. The other important environmental influence, declining enrollments, represented the campuses' ability to deal directly with other elements in the environment, and thus was both a limitation on the board office's ability to act and a major justification for individual campus actions. The legislature's formula for allocating funds on the basis of full-time equivalent students served as a critical motivator to shaping of external studies.

The threat of declining enrollments had varying affects on the consideration processes. At Alpha, the concern for losing faculty positions was apparently never linked to perception of external studies as a means to offset enrollment decline. Conversely, each of the other three institutions feared losses resulting from enrollment decline and tied that concern to the consideration processes. At Beta, that threat was a primary motivator for adopting the central office's view of the innovation. At Gamma, the extended campus plan was expedited by the threatened decline, thus reducing the impact of the board office's policy direction. At Delta, the threatened and actual enrollment decline combined with other organizational conflicts, thus contributing to the failure to implement the external studies innovation.

The Critical Factors. The organizations that responded favorably to the state board office policy direction experienced differing combinations of what Easton calls demand and stress than did the noncomplying institutions. The matrix

---

*The questions of limitations on that accrued legitimacy, e.g. was it specific to the campus or to the kind of issue, need to be addressed.

(Figure 1) included here shows the relationship between the clarity of the board's policy demand (depicted on the verticle axis) and the degree of stress, or perceived threat of enrollment decline (represented on the horizontal axis).

FIGURE 1

Institutions Arranged According to the Degree of Stress and Clarity of Demand

high stress, clear demand	low stress, clear demand
Beta*	Alpha*
	degree of stress
Delta Gamma	
high stress, unclear demand	low stress, unclear demand

clarity

*Adopting Institutions

The matrix describes the general conditions necessary for acceptance, but those conditions are modified by specific characteristics of the variables. The data suggest, for example, that clear articulation of demands depend upon a clear initial statement and clear perception by the receiver of required behaviors and their relationship to existing organizational problems. Clarity of perceptions seems to be affected, in turn, by perceptions of the generating unit as well as the innovation itself.

As the one institution classified as receiving both high stress and clear demand, Beta met both of the requirements listed above. There, the board office demand was clearly restated by the president who defined expectations and program requirements and showed the relationship to declining enrollments. Alpha's understanding of the requirements of the board office policy direction were clear, but no need for extending enrollment was perceived. In keeping with Tushman's (1977) funding that accurate information is difficult to get across boundaries and inaccurate information hinders innovation, neither Delta nor Gamma totally understood the requirements and neither adopted programs.

This macro-approach to the problem of innovation suggests the first problem in implementation is assuring consideration of a clearly articulated demand. Although bureaucratic authority is sufficient to gain access to an organization's agenda, implementation depends upon clear communication of the innovation's requirements. In the case presented here, the systematic efforts of the state board office to assure high quality communication to appropriate individuals encountered a number of facilitator and barriers. They are identified in the following hypotheses:

Implementation is facilitated by:

1) Boundary personnel's clear perception of environmental demands

2) Perception that the innovation will help solve environmental problems and thus enhance organizational control of the environment.

3) Positive perceptions of the originating unit.

Implementation is hindered by:

1) Negative perceptions of the originating unit.

2) Add-ons to the innovation, e.g. legitimating changing roles, expanding a power base.

These facilitators and barriers affect the innovation's initial entrance into the organization. The following treatment of the internal decision processes further specifies other factors affecting the implementation process.

Perspectives on the Internal Decision Processes

To identify organizational decision making factors that facilitate or hinder implementation of innovation, the major components of three theoretical models that have been applied to problems of changing educational organizations

are synthesized. The multiperspective viewpoint resulting from analyzing then combining elements of diffusion, organizational development, and community power theories offers insights from each and provides a more comprehensive analysis.

Diffusion Models. The plethora of educational diffusion studies describe innovation/adoption as a process carried on by individuals. The present analysis retains the process dimensions but rejects the individualistic bias in favor of collective decision analysis.

Diffusion theories characteristically trace an innovation through a number of stages, although the number of stages and the labels applied to them may vary (e.g. Rogers, 1962; Clark, 1968; Miles, 1964; Havelock and Havelock, 1973; Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971; Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek, 1973). The theory identifies three factors critical to the process: the innovation itself (Miles, 1964; Baldridge and Burnham, 1975), the type of individual involved at each stage (Lindquist, 1974) and the structural effects (Miles, 1964; House, 1974). The approach suggests two general categories of analysis: the innovative itself and the process including the characteristics of both individuals and organizations involved. The other two theoretical perspectives, organizational development and community power theories, are useful for their insights into the social system characteristics and the process of collective decision making.

Organizational Development Theory. A major assumption of organizational development theory is that social science information can be used to change organizations, but the theoretical framework for accomplishing that goal has not been defined. Rather, lists of strategies are presented. Although it has a clear social control orientation (Argyris, 1970), the essence of the organizational development model is its prescriptive demand that democratic values be practiced through consensual decision making (Bennis, 1969). This concern with the orga-

nizations' values and norms and its decision making structures identifies areas worthy of attention.

Political/Conflict Models. Political models by definition are concerned with influence, the exercise of power. Gamson's definition of influence as a case in which "A must at least partially be determining B's behavior," (1968, p. 60) is useful because it attributes neither too much nor too little to the concept of influence. The essence of political models is that power is a resource (e.g. Wilson, 1966; Schmuck and Runkel, 1972) whose use will encourage delays (Bardach, 1977) or resistance (Gamson, 1968) which may in turn develop into conflict (Kahn and Boulding, 1964; Baldridge, 1971). In a political application of an organizational development model, Pettrigrew argues that political behavior occurs when individuals or units make claims against the resource sharing system of the organization, and consequently political activity is associated with change (1975).

Political theorists view power in a descriptive, not a pejorative, sense and suggest that it is a means of achieving goals. Similarly, any resulting conflict may be either useful or harmful. Recognizing that the presence of conflict demands some response, Kahn and Boulding (1964, p. 90) recommend collaboration, the "absence of hostility in the face of conflict."

In short, the political model suggests that the participant's ability to exercise influence as well as the actual exercise of the influenced may affect the decision processes This model is applied to the data at the consideration stage.

Characteristics of the Innovation

The differing perceptions and definitions of External Degree/Studies affected the adoption processes. At Beta, the innovation was defined to allow faculty to continue similar roles, i.e. they would function as advisors and evaluators.

Faculty had the option of changing their behavior by developing competency assessment techniques, but that change was not required for program implementation. In contrast, at Alpha the effectiveness of the implementation process depended upon faculty shifting from evaluation of knowledge to evaluation of competencies. In other words, the faculty had to develop a new role definition and a complementary set of behaviors. The required role changes posed a serious impediment to effective program expansion, and consequently suggests the hypothesis that:

> The greater the role change requirements, the less likely an innovation will be accepted.

Consideration/Implementation Process

As they considered organizational adoption of innovation, Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) reviewed community power literature and suggested a three-step process may occur. In the tradition of diffusion theorists, those three steps are adapted and renamed to be: initiative, consideration, and decision/action stages. The legitimation function highlighted by Rogers and Shoemaker serves as a subset of all three.

Initiation. The single most important variable at the initiation stage was setting the agenda, i.e. getting the organization to consider the proposal. This was easily accomplished through the campus presidents. The literature suggests two additional variables may be important at the initiation stage, the characteristics of the individuals (Lindquist, 1974) and the timing of the innovation into the system (C ark, 1968).

The individuals who nitiated the discussion on the system level and at the campuses fit Lindquist's description of cosmopolitans, e.g. they were boundary personnel in touch with the general environment and with other innovators. These individuals were not equally concerned with and understanding of the innovation. The primary advocates remained, therefore, in the state

board office. The timing was also critical, particularly at Gamma where consideration of alternatives had been taking place in the absence of an external degree proposal. Hence, the proposal arrived too late for action. In addition, the simultaneous concern with declining enrollments facilitated consideration at some of the campuses.

These data suggest only that the appropriate set of environmental and internal concerns must converge; they do not suggest the factors that affect that convergence. The data do, however, suggest one hypothesis for further testing:

> The greater the organizational distance between the initial advocates and the adopting unit, the less likely the innovation will be adopted.

Consideration. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) suggests that the second stage in the process function to adapt the innovation to the system. Each of the campus committees was assigned the adaptation task. To analyze how the committees accomplished their task, attention is paid to the decision making structure, influence exercised within that structure, the resistance encountered, and the decisions reached.

Each of the campus committees had been initiated by the president at the request of the board's Educational Policies Committee. At Beta, that committee continued to report to the president. When the committee consulted with the faculty senate, it was to share rather than request decisions. Although the state board office designed the on-campus process to include both administrative and faculty leaderships, the balance between the two groups varied. At Beta, the president was the key influence leader from the innovation's initial introduction through the program's initiation when he relinquished his influence role to the program director. Along the way, a powerful but skeptical faculty member shared influence. Decisions clearly remained with the administratively appointed committee, indicating a norm of administrative direction was operating with no identified resistance. The committee's final decision created an additional subunit structured to manage the innovation.

This decision minimized the role requirement changes for faculty, and apparently facilitated implementation.

Alpha's committee, although initiated by the president, was reconstituted in membership and reporting lines the first time it reported to the faculty senate, indicating the senate's ability to control the process and ultimately the substantive outcomes. A norm requiring faculty participation in decision making appeared to be operating. The influence leaders--a middle manager and a senior faculty member--were involved in both committees. Their philosophical commitment to the innovation as well as their influence was reflected in the final proposal which required significant faculty behavior changes. The extent of the changes required hindered the implementation process. Those committed to the innovation apparently did not have influence widespread enough to legitimate the decision and thus achieve the required behavior changes.

Some of the activities at Alpha can be defined as either delays or resistance. The president's appointing committee members with little generalized influence, the senate's concern about process issues, or the faculty's refusal to participate may all be construed as resistance. No overt conflict resulted, however, and the program hired a director, charged with identifying and assisting students as well as convincing faculty to participate in a program that gave them no immediate rewards.

Although the president also introduced the innovation at Gamma, its consideration was incorporated into an on-going committee. Here a pluralist atmosphere clearly put the faculty senate in control of both the process and substantive issue. The adaptation of the original extended campus committee to allow committee selection of the chairperson while retaining the substantive charge to examine campus priorities committee exemplifies this. Throughout the extended

campus consideration, a faculty controlled committee that received widespread support set the program directions. Gamma's rejection of the External Degree program, somewhat by default, and the failure to implement a program, may be defined as resistance to the innovation. A more plausible explanation is that the innovation entered the system at an inappropriate time. This, combined with a generalized resistance to board office direction, resulted in a failure to implement.

Althougth both administration and faculty at Delta seemed to share a definition and interest in the innovation, they could not extend that agreement to practical issues. No sense of collegiality or shared decision making existed. The continuing disagreement on process issues, and the inability to reach and effect decisions reflected a more generalized level of conflict. Consideration of external degree proposal contributed to this general conflict level but did not cause it. To further specify the dynamics of the consideration process, two hypotheses should be tested:

> Resistance or conflict on process issues may substitute for resistance or conflict on substantive issues and thus hinder adoption.
>
> Acceptance of the decision making process facilitates consideration, adoption or implementation.

Decision/Action. At the decision/action stage two factors assumed most importance: capable, action-oriented program directors and resource commitment. The program flourished only at Beta with the action-oriented director and the combination of state and federal resources that allowed hiring external studies advisors, developing materials, and recruiting 185 students. The influence and the resources, including the students combined to allow creation of an organizational subunit that could function somewhat independently of the mainstream campus activities. Although Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) hypothesize that involvement of legitimators is positively related to adoption, these data suggest that legitimator influence may have combined with the selected organizational structure to create legitimacy. At Alpha, the decision to adopt a program did

not legitimate the innovation and did not lead to innovation. The conditions for creating this legitimacy need to be more clearly specified.

Although at the decision/action stage, the critical factors seem more apparent, the number of hypotheses increases to account for the culmination of the consideration/implementation process. The hypotheses are divided into those regarding individual behaviors as well as social system and organization structure.

Individual

Influential program directors, able to effectively manage the bureaucratic system, facilitate implementation.

Social System

Norms of administrative control facilitate adoption of administratively initiated innovations.

Legitimation is a function of individual influence and nonthreatening decisions.

The greater the support of existing values, the less likely the program will be innovative.

The greater the change required in personal behaviors, the less likely the innovation will be effectively implemented.

Organizational

Resource commitment at a level that depends upon changing majority faculty behaviors does not facilitate innovation implementation.

A heavy resource commitment that permits the creation of an organizational subunit facilitates innovation and redirects the issue of legitimacy.

The greater the number of decisions required, the less likely the innovation will be implemented.

Implications

The synthesis of the theoretical perspectives presented here contributes an overall view of the implementation process that begins with the decision to

promote an innovation through to the acceptance, modification, or rejection of the policy. The synthesized theoretical perspective leads to an overall view of the implementation process and the beginnings of specifying testable hypotheses within a general model.

The theoretical importance of the model derives from this synthesis. By viewing the decision processes regarding innovation from an overall political systems framework, the analysis is directed towards environmental variables. Of equal importance, the model builds on the strength of existing theories while avoiding the pitfalls. Specifically, the model overcomes the individualistic bias of diffusion theorists by adopting the collective analyses used by power theorists. At the same time, the diffusion theory gives a process dimension to group interactions analysis that seems lacking in the community power literature.

In addition to the gains made by specifying the components of the implementation process, this study raises questions relevant to the relationships between innovation and declining resources. These relationships deserve investigation within the general framework of management of decline.

REFERENCES

Argyris, C. Intervention Theory and Method: A Behavioral Science View. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1970.

Baldridge, J. V. Power and Conflict in the University. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1971.

Baldridge, J. V., & Burnham, R. A. Organizational Innovation: Individual, Organizational and Environmental Impacts. Administrative Science Quarterly, June 1975, 20, 165-176.

Bardach, Eugene. The Implementation Game: What Happens After a Bill Becomes a Law. Cambridge, Mass; The MIT Press, 1977.

Bennis, W. G. Organizational Development: Its Nature, Origins, and Prospects. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969.

Havelock, R. G., & Havelock, M. C. Training for Change Agents: A Guide to the Design of Training Programs in Education and Other Fields. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1973.

Houle, C. O. The External Degree. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.

House, E. R. The Politics of Educational Innovation. Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1974.

Kahn, R. L., & Boulding, E. Power and Conflict in Organizations. New York: Basic Books, 1964.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. The Social Psychology of Organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966.

Keil, E. C. A Structure for Innovation in Education. Educational Technology. October 1969, 9(10), 35-40.

Lindquist, J. D., & Blackburn, R. T. Middlegrove: The Locus of Campus Power at a State University. AAUP Bulletin, Winter 1974, 60(4), 367-378.

Miles, M. B. Innovation in Education. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964.

McNeil, K. Understanding Organizational Power: Building on the Weberian Legacy. Administrative Sciences Quarterly, March 1978, 23(1), 65-83.

Nunnery, M. Y., & Kimbrough, R. B. Effective Educational Leadership is Political: A Position Revisited. Planning and Change, October 1971, 2(3), 127-139.

Rogers, E. M. Diffusion of Innovations. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962.

Rogers, E. M., & Shoemaker, F. F. Communications of Innovations: A Cross-Cultural Approach. New York: The Free Press, 1971.

Snarr, O. W. The State Teachers Colleges in Minnesota's Program of Higher Education. In Minnesota Commission on Higher Education, Higher Education in Minnesota. Minneapolis; University of Minnesota Press, 1950.

Schmuck, R. A., Runkel, P. J., and others. Handbook of Organizational Development in Schools. Eugene, Ore.: National Press Books, 1972.

Tushman, M. L. Special Boundary Roles in the Innovation Process. Administrative Science Quarterly, December 1977, 22(4), 587-605.

Wilson, J. Q. Innovation in Organizations: Notes Toward a Theory. In J. D. Thompson (Ed.), Approaches to Organizational Design. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966.

Zaltman, G., Duncan, R., & Holbek, J. Innovations and Organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973.